



Is your tech working for you?

How to assess the true value
of your IT investments

There's more to ROI than dollars and cents

Are your technology investments really driving optimal value for your business—or are they actually creating more problems than they solve? To answer that question, you've got to look beyond spreadsheets and calculators to assess your technologies in the context of your strategic agenda. While traditional financial metrics like efficiency still matter, long-term success depends more on priorities like workforce transformation, strategic flexibility, security, and manageability.

In its recent report [The Future of IT](#), Forrester discussed the need for company leadership to look beyond financials in evaluating IT investments. To ensure market agility, meet changing customer expectations, and harness innovation, the report calls on corporate leaders to “gain fluency in the technology choices made and in the portfolio performance of different innovation efforts, becoming clear-eyed and visionary about how to make business technology a basis of durable strategic advantage and valuation.”

What does that mean for your organization? The first step is to assess your existing technologies against these new, more strategic criteria. In this guide, we'll consider the priorities that matter most for today's businesses, and then look at four questions you can ask to determine whether your investments are really delivering the ROI they should.

“In 2018, more than 50% of digital transformation efforts failed or stalled as the sheer size, complexity, and change of the mandate overwhelmed organizations.”

Forrester, *The Future of IT*, 2019.

The priorities that matter for today's businesses

While every company has its own unique strategic needs and business priorities, there are a few industry-wide trends that offer a good starting point for your evaluation.

Adapting to changing workforce needs

No matter what business you're in, your employees depend on a modern, people-centric work experience to become fully engaged and productive. Today, that means giving people the flexibility over both the tools they use and the places they work—while also ensuring reliable and secure access to the resources they depend on, and a consistent experience across scenarios.

A [recent survey](#) conducted by Wakefield Research with Citrix showed the scope of this ongoing evolution as well as its implications for workplace technology:

- **69 percent** of office professionals report that employees in their workplace **regularly work remotely**.
- **21 percent** of office professionals **blend environments** by working both in an office and somewhere else, such as at home or a communal workspace, and **14 percent exclusively work somewhere other** than a traditional office location.
- **80 percent** of office professionals agree that in five years, businesses with a flexible work environment **will not be competitive without using cloud-based apps**.

Meeting rising customer expectations, competitive pressures, and security demands

As new business models, upstart competitors, and customer preferences emerge seemingly overnight, agility in all its forms has become a critical requirement. Companies have to be able to move quickly to capture new opportunities, whether by spinning up a new location or work team, integrating with a merged or acquired company, adopting a game-changing technology, or delivering a new experience to customers.

At the same time, security has never been more critical—or more challenging. IT transformation has greatly expanded the attack vectors available to hackers, from mobile devices to web apps to IoT. High-profile breaches have made data protection top-of-mind for consumers. And new mandates like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) have raised the stakes for every business.

Can your current technologies—and the investments you're considering—help you meet these requirements?

Four questions to ask about a technology solution

To measure true ROI, look beyond the spreadsheet and consider these essential criteria

1. Can it help people get more done, more easily?

On an individual level, employees need workplace tools that are smarter, faster, and more seamless no matter where they choose to work or which devices, apps, and networks they use. A modern work experience helps them become more engaged, productive, and satisfied, increasing the value of the corporate workforce.

For your business, modern workplace tools should help you increase revenue by:

- Providing simpler technology experiences so line-of-business employees and IT can focus on higher-value activities
- Enabling distributed teams to collaborate easily across distance
- Accelerating time to value for new locations, M&A, and work teams

If a technology is difficult or time-consuming to work with, is it really helping your business do business?

2. Does it reduce or increase IT complexity?

IT transformation has sent complexity soaring. To support today's dispersed and mobile workforce, organizations are using more types of apps, storing data in more places, and shifting to hybrid and multi-cloud architectures. These changes drive considerable business value—but they also mean dealing with challenges including:

- App and data sprawl across data centers, clouds, and third-party providers, as well as pervasive shadow IT
- A fragmented environment of point solutions, platforms, and channels that create silos and redundant work effort
- An overwhelming burden of day-to-day management that diverts attention and resources from innovation

Each of your investments either adds to IT complexity, or reduces it. That's a key factor in its ROI.

3. How does it impact security?

A more complex IT environment—and equally dynamic threat landscape—makes security an unprecedented challenge. Companies face increased risk via attack vectors including public networks, mobile devices, and web apps, as well as insider threats, phishing, and so on. Any lapse or breach can bring devastating headlines and regulatory fines. Meanwhile, it's never been harder to hire skilled security professionals. The numbers paint a clear picture:

- 83% of organizations say that the rising complexity of business and IT operations increases vulnerability
- The average cost of a data breach is \$3.86 million
- Ransomware costs in 2017 exceeded \$5 billion

Sometimes it's worth taking on added risk in exchange for exceptional business value—but make sure you factor that tradeoff into your evaluation. And if a technology can make security simpler, more transparent, and more effective, that's a big plus.

4. Will it limit strategic flexibility?

The hybrid, multi-cloud era has brought tremendous freedom to IT and developers alike, making it possible to provision resources on demand, scale easily, and support users anywhere—while also meeting requirements for security, performance, and data sovereignty. On the user end, the freedom to choose any device and any network gives IT more options for the way employees are empowered.

The technologies you invest in now should allow similar freedom of choice. That includes:

- Delivery of workloads in the cloud, on-premises, or both
- Providing great app performance using any cloud platform or network
- Ensuring a consistent, high-quality user experience regardless of cloud platform

No technology exists in a vacuum. If one of your investments limits the utility of other investments, it can degrade their value as well as its own.

Driving strategic impact with high-value investments

The modern workspace illustrates the value of looking beyond financials to evaluate ROI. By delivering all apps and data within a unified workspace, with unified management and security across environments and platforms, IT can increase efficiency to lower cost—but that's only part of the equation.

The true ROI of a modern workspace also takes into account its value for advancing key priorities for IT and the business, including:

- **Improving productivity** – Employees get the great experience they need to do their best work, however and wherever they're working, while the business becomes more agile and competitive.
- **Reducing the complexity of transformation** – IT can manage every element of the diverse enterprise environment more simply, making it possible to shift focus from day-to-day maintenance to innovation and strategy.
- **Strengthening security** – The workspace provides a secure digital perimeter around company data, even beyond the corporate firewall, to defend the organization without limiting flexibility.
- **Ensuring choice** – IT can use any blend of on-premises and cloud resources to provide access to apps and data, allowing a future-proof strategy for long-term value.

If you find that the ROI of your existing investments isn't measuring up to the needs of your business, a modern workspace can provide the clear returns you're looking for—in the areas that matter most. **Citrix can help you make sure your technology investments deliver the value you're counting on. To learn more, call us at [1 800-441-3453](tel:18004413453).**

Sources

1. "The Need for a New IT Security Architecture," Ponemon Institute, sponsored by Citrix, 2017.
2. "2018 Cost of a Data Breach Study," Ponemon Institute, sponsored by IBM, 2018.
3. "2017 Cost of Cybercrime Study," Ponemon Institute, sponsored by Accenture, 2017.

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